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OPINION 35

Conservation of the Specific Epithet
meningitidis in the scientific name
of the Meningococcus

Editorial Secretary (for the Judicial Commission of the
International Committee on Nomenclature of Bacteria)

SUMMARY. The specific epithet "meningitidis" is conserved in the scientific name of the meningococcus (Diplococcus intracellularis meningitidis Weichselbaum) against all earlier specific epithets applied to this organism. It was noted by the Judicial Commission that the name Neisseria meningitidis has not been validly published and that the preferred procedure in this case is for an author to propose the name under his own authority, at the same time providing a description of the organism. The neotype strain for this organism is ATCC 13077 = Sara E. Branham M1027 = NCTC 10025.

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According to the action taken by the Judicial Commission at the VIIIth International Congress for Microbiology (Clark and Seeliger 1962, p. 28, Minute 64; Lessel 1970, p. 3, Minute 15) the Judicial Commission conserved ... "the specific epithet meningitidis in the species name Neisseria meningitidis ..." However as pointed out by the Editorial Board (1962, 42), the name Neisseria meningitidis was not validly published by Holland (1920). Furthermore, although Bergey et al. (1923) and Murray (1948) used the name Neisseria meningitidis, they cited Holland as the author of the name; they did not propose the new combination, as stated by the Editorial Board (1962, 42, 43). The name Neisseria meningitidis has, therefore, not been validly published. The Judicial Commission noted (see Lessel 1970, p. 8, Minute 48) that in cases such as this, the preferred procedure is that an author propose the name under his own authority, at the same time providing a description of the organism and designating the type or neotype strain, if necessary. The strain (ATCC

13077 = Branham M1027 = NCTC 10025) suggested by Branham (1958, 8) as the neotype for this organism was approved by the Judicial Commission.

Opinion 35. The specific epithet "meningitidis" is conserved in the scientific name of the meningococcus (Diplococcus intracellularis meningitidis Weichselbaum) against all earlier specific epithets. The neotype strain of this organism is ATCC 13077 = Sara E. Branham M1027 = NCTC 10025.

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